

The Legend of

MAARTHA AND JARMA



TRIGAL ROMANCE
ERACA

MAARTHAANDA VARMA



IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, TRIVANCORE WAS A HOTBED OF INTRIGUE. IN TRIVANDRUM, AT THE HOUSE OF KUTAMAN, THEIR LEADER...

...THE GROUP OF EIGHT — POWERFUL, REBELLIOUS, FEUDAL LORDS WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TROUBLE IN THE LAND — WAS PLOTTING AS USUAL.



OUR MAHARAJA HAS GONE TO TRICHINOPOLY* WITH PILLAI.

!!



DO YOU KNOW WHY HE HAS PLANS OF BRINGING IN MERCENARIES FROM MADURAI TO SUPPRESS US.

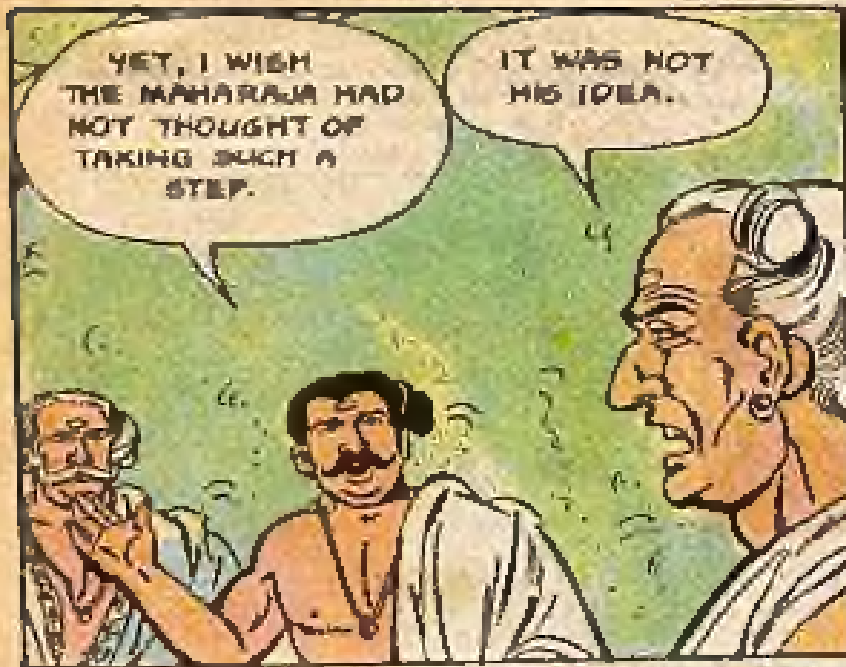


BUT NOTHING IS LOST. THE MEN HAVE TO BE PAID. WE WILL SEE THAT THE ROYAL TREASURY DOES NOT HAVE THE MONEY.



HENCEFORTH NO ONE SHALL PAY TAXES.

OUR MEN SHALL ATTEND TO THAT.





WHICH PEOPLE WHO HAS RESISTED ANY-THING WE HAVE DONE SO FAR?

THAMPI HIMSELF MAY RESIST THE IDEA.



HE WON'T. IN FACT HE SECRETLY COVETS THE THRONE. I HAVE IT FROM HIS COMPANION AND COUNSELLOR, SUNDARAM.

THE MAN WHO SPOKE WAS RAAMANNAMACHARI, SUTANNA'S TRUSTED CARRY, AND HE WAS RIGHT.



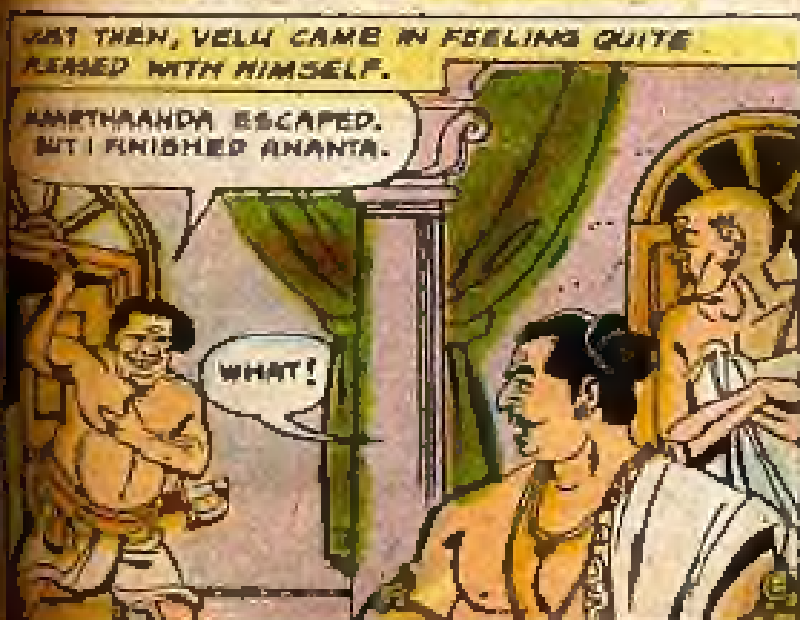
THAMPI HAD HIS OWN SCHEMES TO ACHIEVE HIS END. IT WAS PLACED IN RAAMANNAMACHARI'S HANDS —

WHAT'S THE PROGRESS, SUNDARAM? WHEN WILL I...

PATIENCE, SIR. PILLAI'S SON, ANANTA, AND THAT BODYGUARD FOLLOW MAARTHAANDA LIKE A SHADOW.



BUT OUR VELU HAS FOLLOWED THEM TO NAGERCOIL. HE IS WAITING FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT TO STRIKE.



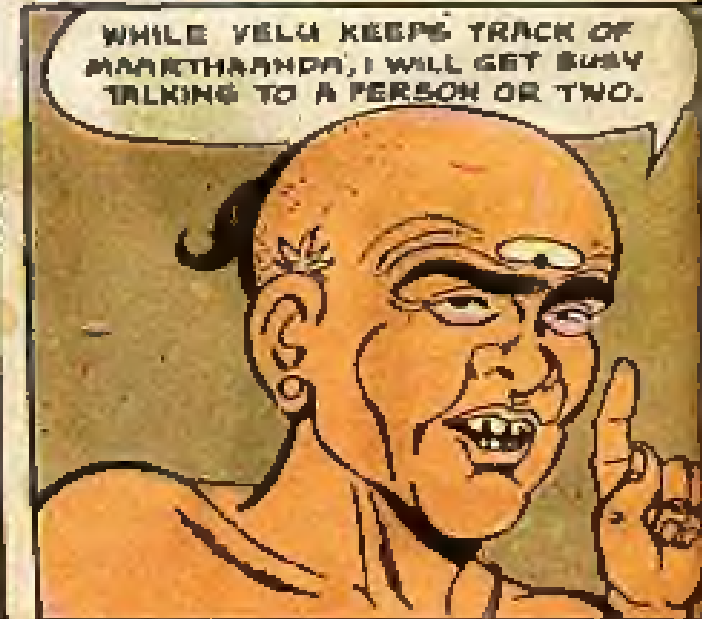
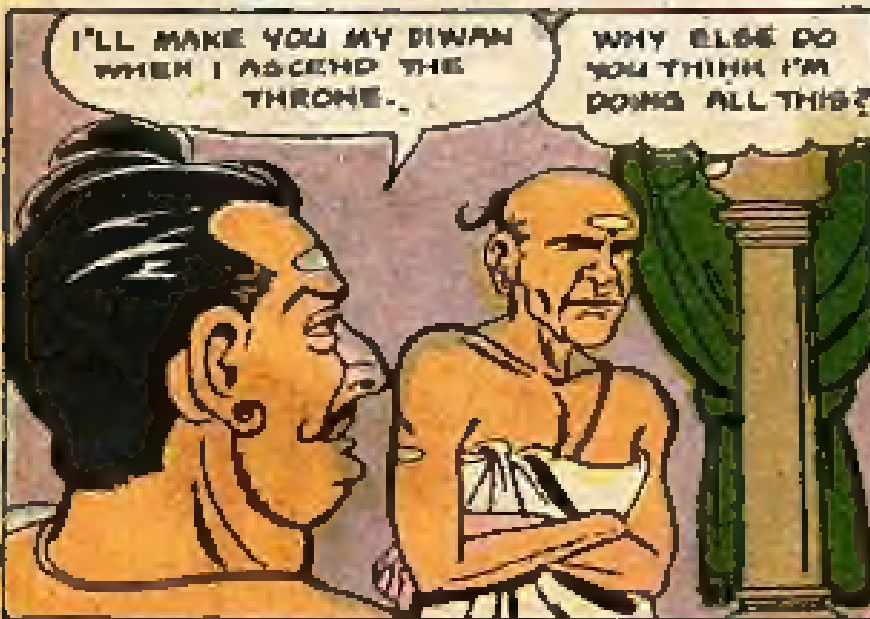
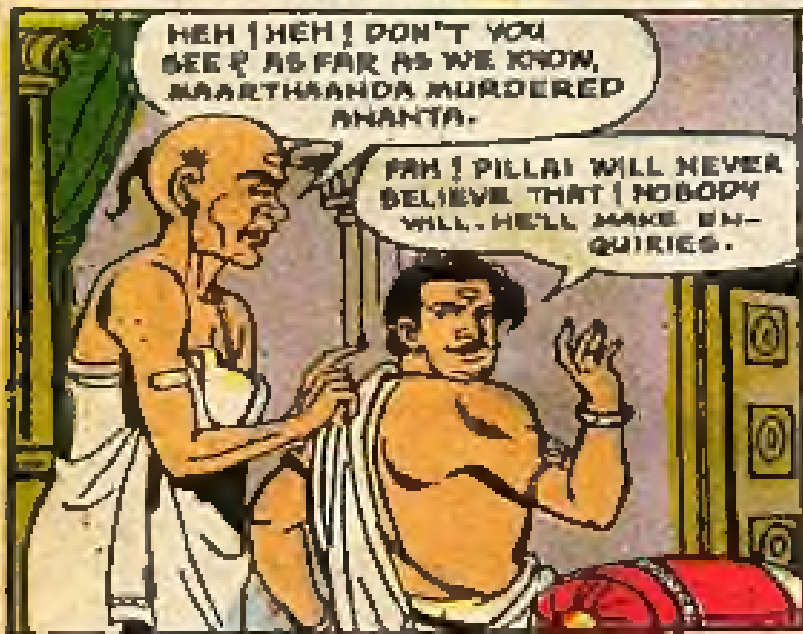
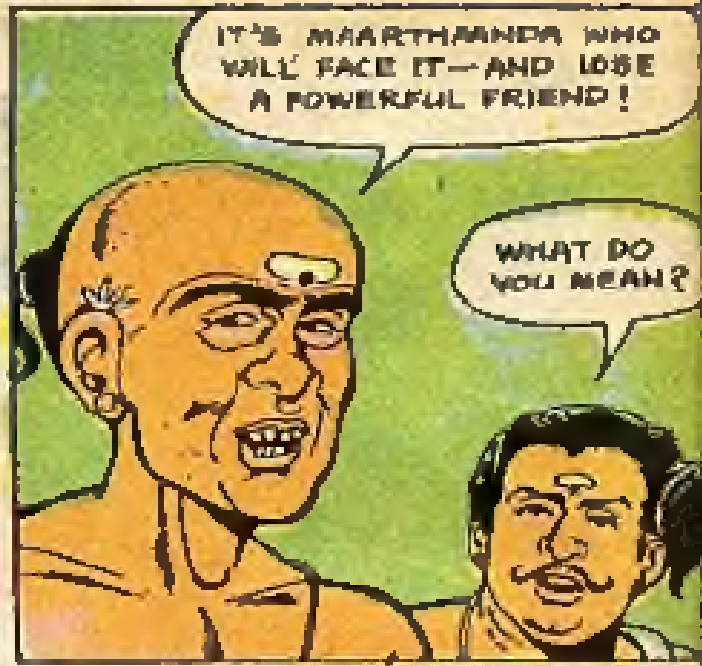
JUST THEN, VELU CAME IN FEELING QUITE PLEASED WITH HIMSELF.

MAARTHAANDA ESCAPED. BUT I FINISHED ANANTA.

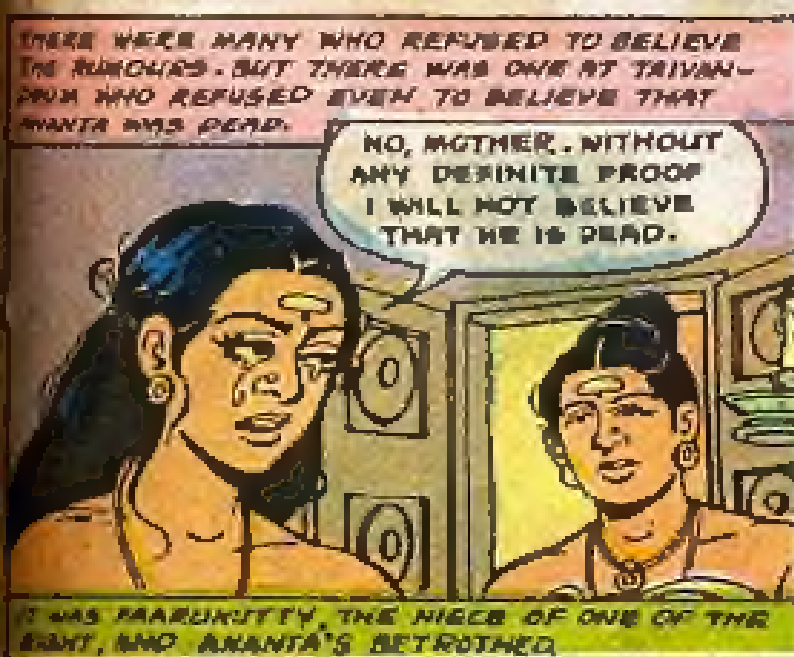
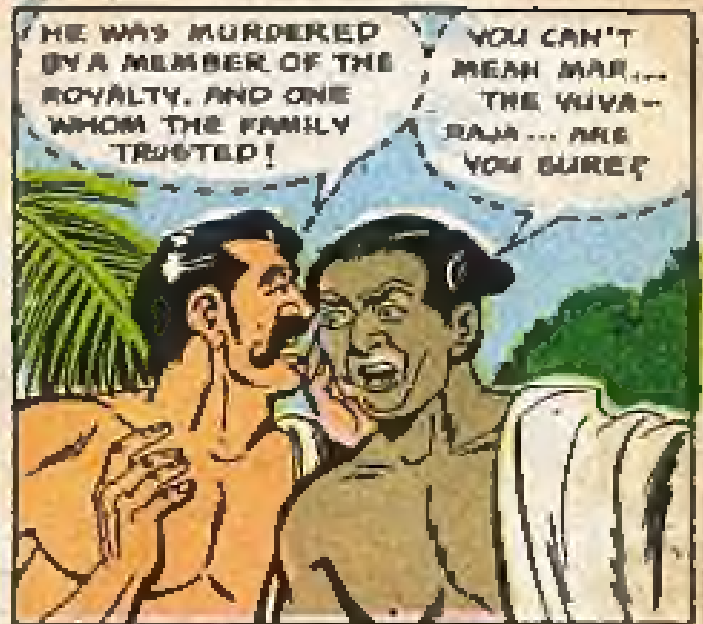
WHAT!

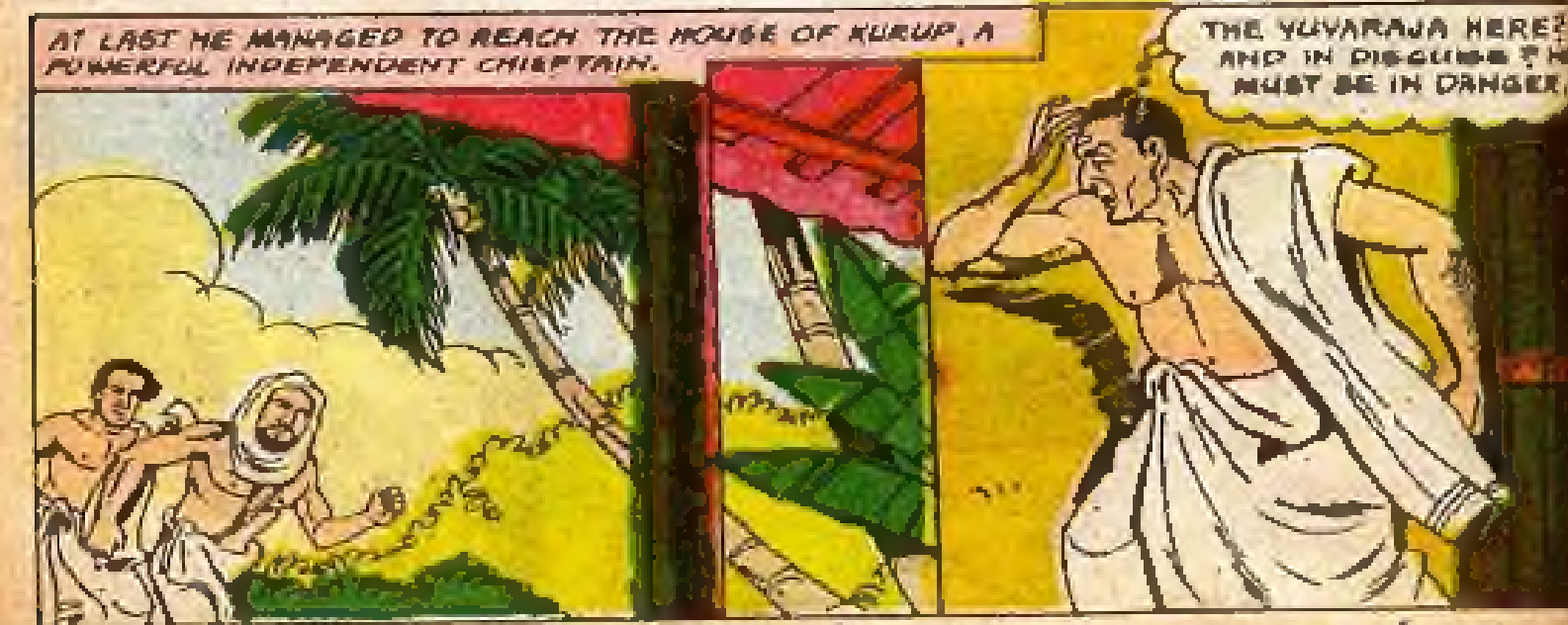
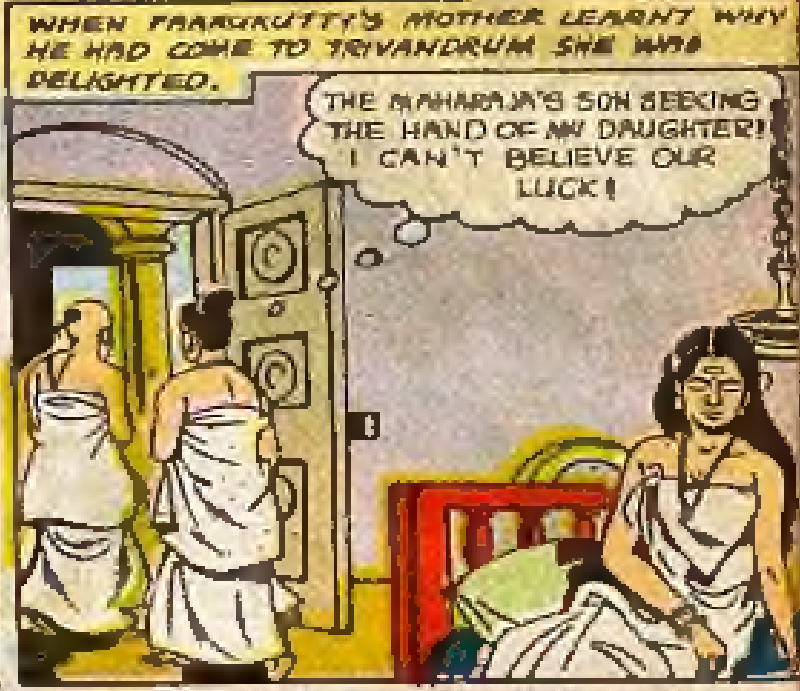


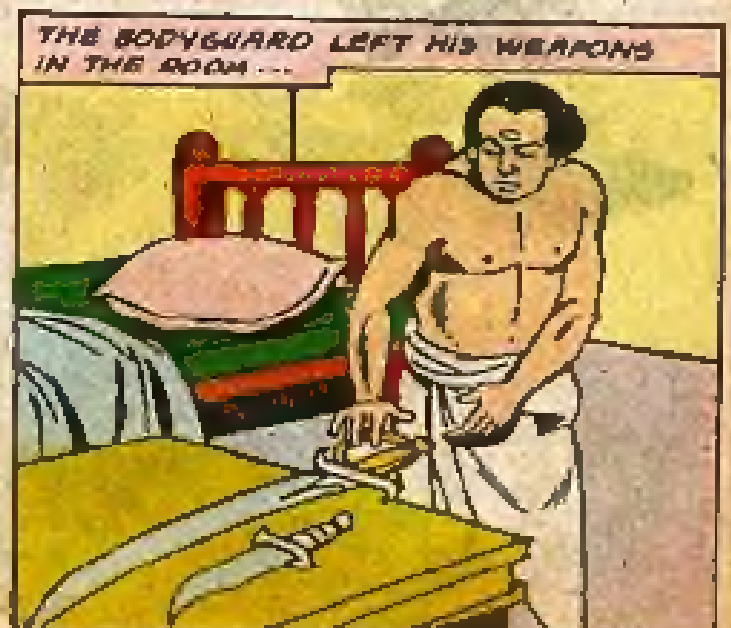
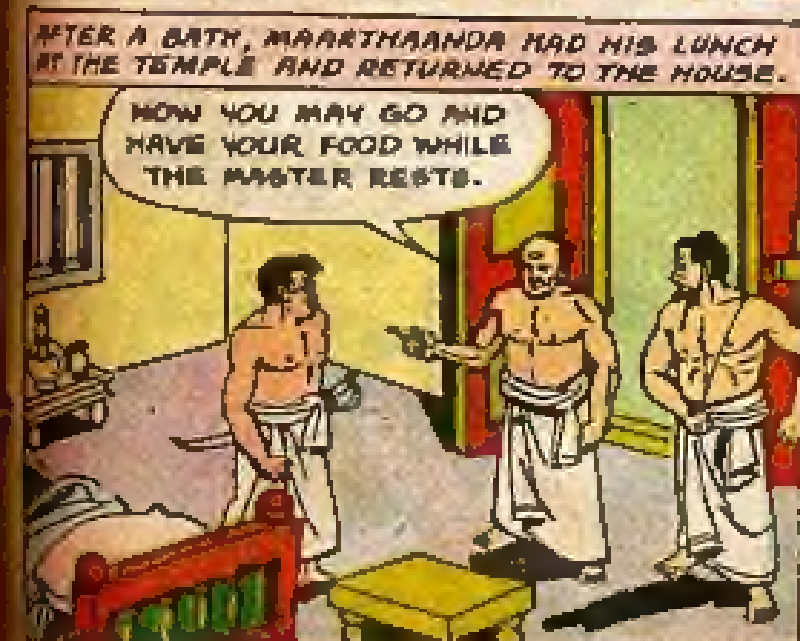
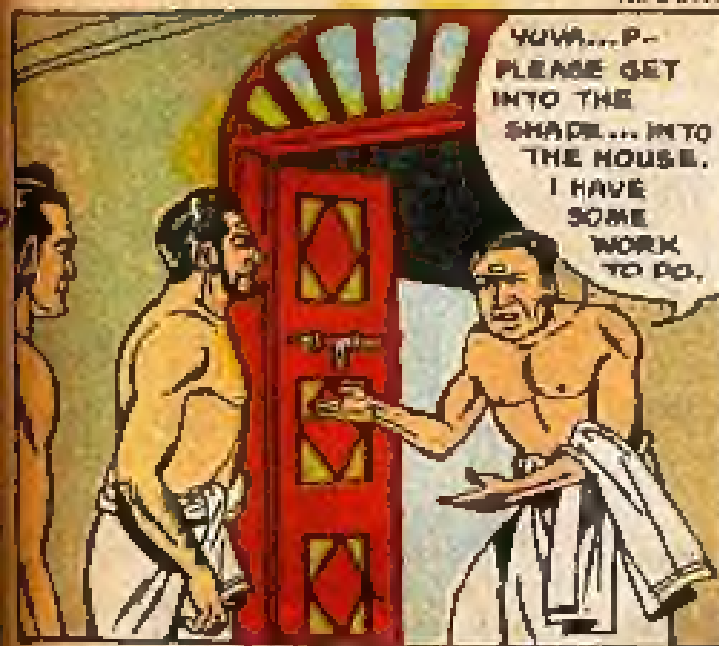
YOU BUNGLER! YOU FOOL! YOU LET MAARTHAANDA LIVE AND PROUDLY TELL ME YOU KILLED PILLAI'S SON. GET OUT!



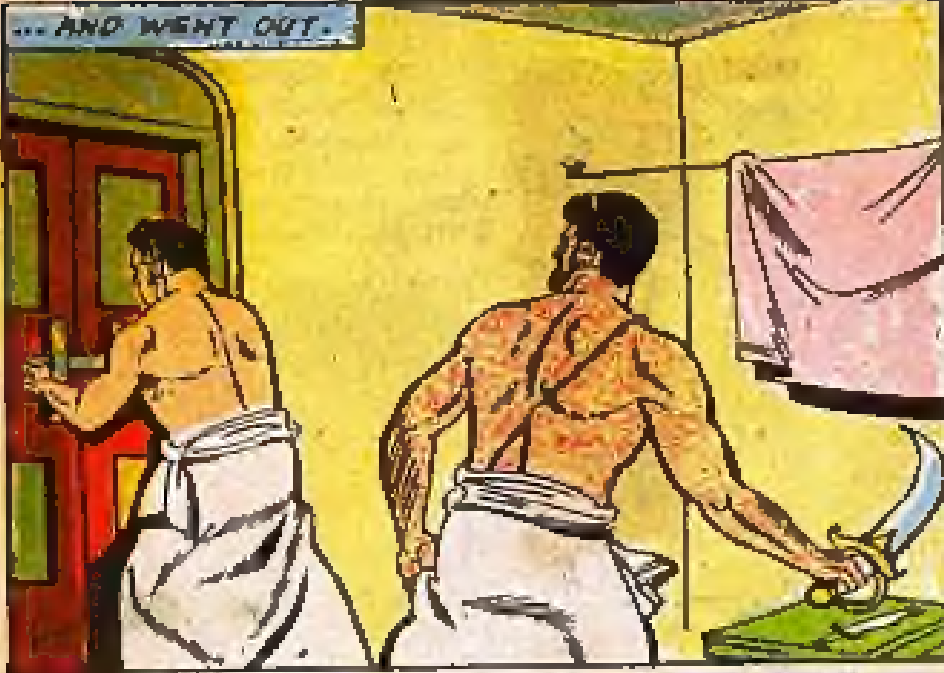
AND SOON —







... AND WENT OUT.



WHEN KURUP TURNED ROUND AND SAW MAARTHANDA —

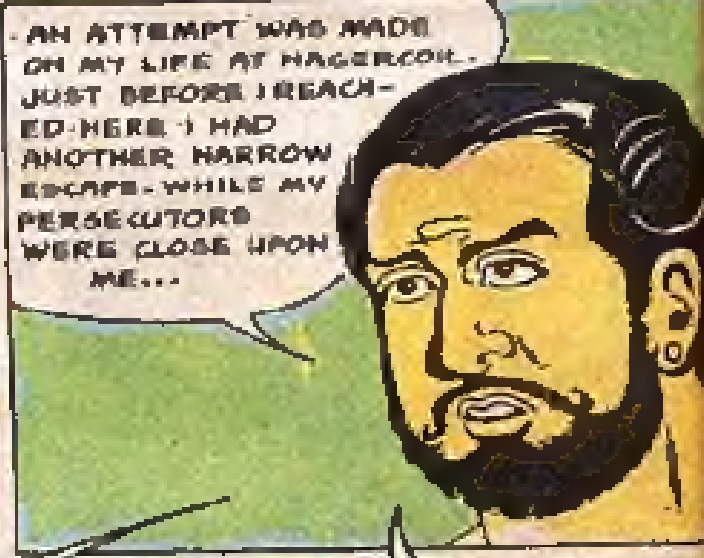
YUVARAJA ! I AM PAINED. HOW CAN YOU MISTRUST ONE OF YOUR MOST LOYAL SUBJECTS ?



PARDON ME, KURUP. IN MY PRESENT FLIGHT, I CANNOT BE TOO CAREFUL.



AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE ON MY LIFE AT NAGERCOIL. JUST BEFORE I REACHED HERE I HAD ANOTHER NARROW ESCAPE. WHILE MY PERSECUTORS WERE CLOSE UPON ME...



... A MAD CHANNNAH SHOWED ME WHERE TO HIDE...



... AND MISDIRECTED THEM.



IN ALL THESE WEEKS THE ONLY SUPPORT WE'VE BEEN PROMISED IS FROM THAT RICH OLD PATHAN TRADER.



THE MERCENARIES ON WHOM WE DEPENDED ARE TURNING FACE BECAUSE WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO PAY THEM.



IF YOU'LL PARDON MY SAYING SO, WHAT ELSE DO YOU EXPECT OF MERCENARIES?



ANYWAY, WHEN YOUR LOYAL SUBJECTS ARE READY TO DIE FOR YOU, WHY BOTHER ABOUT MERCENARIES? WHICH SIDE IS PILLAI ON?



OURS, I PRESUME. I HAVE SENT A LETTER TO HIM TO MEET ME AT TRIVANDRUM.



I AM ON MY WAY THERE TO SEE MY UNCLE, THE MAHARAJA. HE IS SERIOUSLY ILL.





MAASTHANTA TRIED THE DOOR
HE A CALLED ANIMAL

HOW COULD HE DENY
ME THE PRIVILEGE OF
FIGHTING BY HIS SIDE!
TRY THE DOOR AGAIN
HACK IT DOWN!

WENT TO

MAASTHANTA WAS
NOT LONG OUT TO FIGHT,
WHICH MEANS MURUP
HAD LOCKED HIM IN
THE ROOM!

MAASTHANTA WAS GETTING INTO THE HANDS OF THE

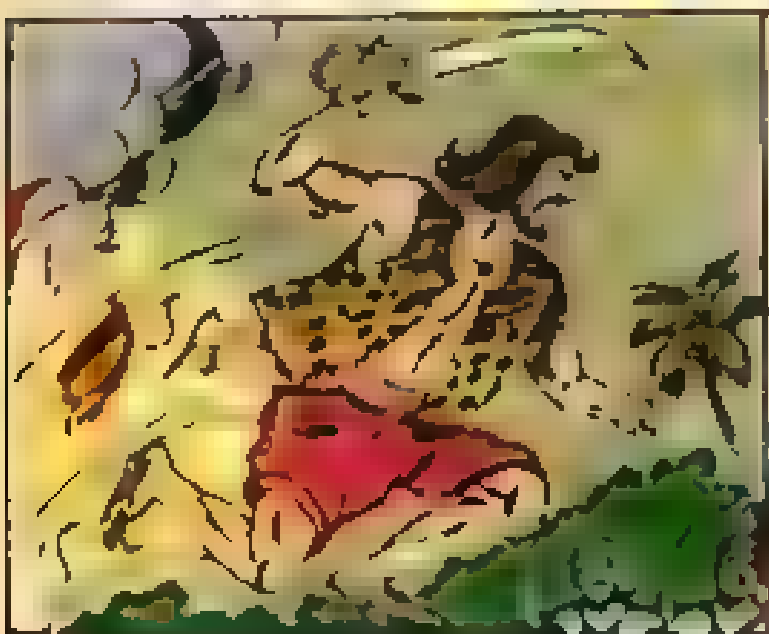
FREE HIM GO!
THE BRAHMANA
WENT TO THE DOOR
AND OPENED IT!

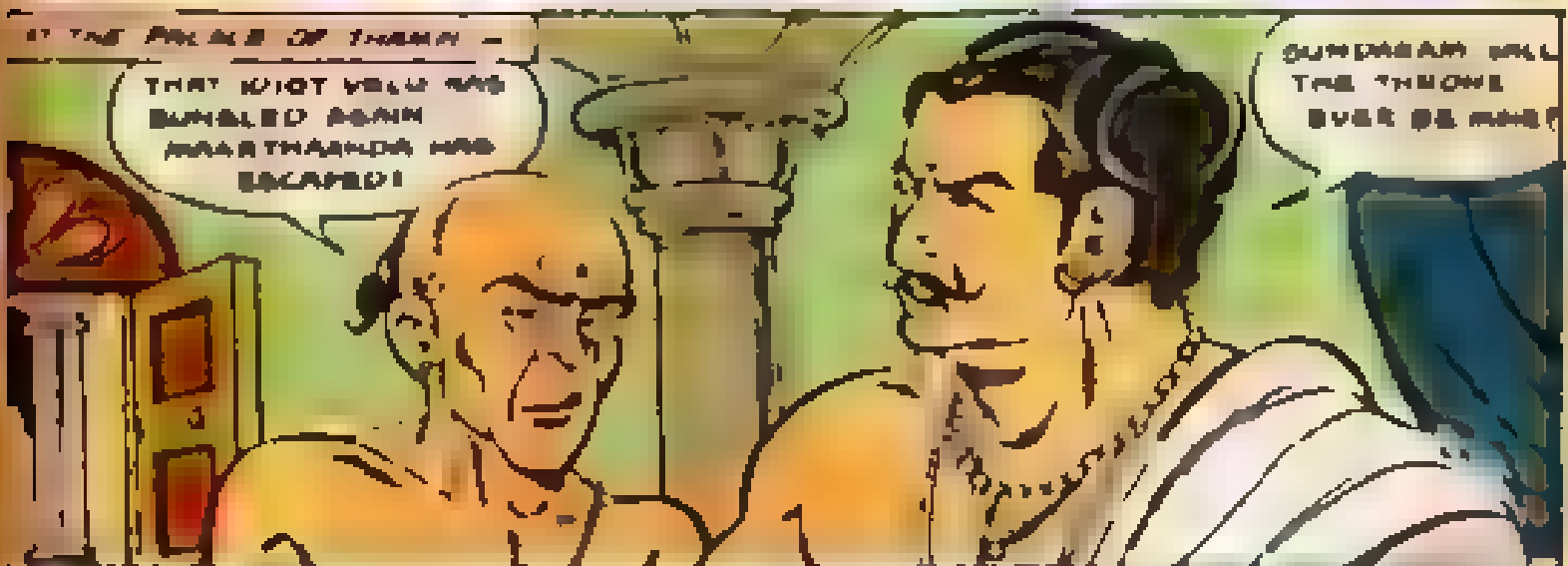
AS HE WAS HEARD, THE MYSTERIOUS
BRAHMANA APPEARED ON A MOUL

YOU AGAIN?
WHERE'S
MURUP?

BEFORE HE COULD GET TO THE DOOR, THE BRAHMANA
GRABBED A SWORD FROM THE ROOM.

AND, HAVING DONE THIS, HE WENT TO THE HOUSE OF HIS FATHER





A WEEK LATER AT TRIVANDRUM —

WITH THE SKILL AND VALOUR
OF KURUP'S MEN I SHOULD
BE ABLE TO SUBDULE THE
CONSPIRATORS.



BUT THAT WILL MEAN
BLOODSHED IF ONLY
THAMPA



AM I HERE HE COMES, IF
ONLY HE ACCEPTS MY
OFFER OF FRIENDSHIP
AND GOODWILL



THAMPA HAD COME TO PAY HIS RES-
PECTS TO HIS FATHER BEFORE
LEAVING FOR PAARUKUTTY'S HOUSE.
BUT AS HE LOOKED UP

OH! HE'S THERE!
LET'S TURN
BACK



I CANNOT WAIT TO SEE
PAARUKUTTY HOW
DOES SHE LOOK?
DESCRIBE HER
TO ME.



AND SUNDARAM RETURNED FROM HIS HOME, HE LEFT HIS HOUSE BEFORE LEAVING
HE LEFT HIS HOUSE AT 10 PM AND WENT TO SLEEP

WAS IN THE
MID A MEETING
WITH THE GOVT
SAY TALKING
SUNDARAM TO
GAVE?

NOT WE YOU GO
I AM NOT FEELING
WE I

SO SUNDARAM LEFT

ALL NO MORE

HEARD THAT IN THE
BED ROOM IS FOR
YOUR MOTHER

SUNDARAM
ARE YOU
AWAKE

YES I
AM
OVER
AT
10 PM

SUBHADRA WAS KUTAMAN'S UNFORTUNATE
NIECE, WHOSE MOTHER HAD DIED AT THE
HER BIRTH, WHOSE FATHER REMAINED UNKNOWN
SHE HAD BEEN RESENTED HER

THE GOVT TO
HAVE BEEN
THERE

WHAT
DO YOU
WISH

WHEN HE WAS NOT DEAD

SHE FELTEN CO NOT TO BE INTERESTED
OH! YOU'VE TAKEN THE
OATH OF BE FELT
WATER IN THE
GOOD NIGHT!

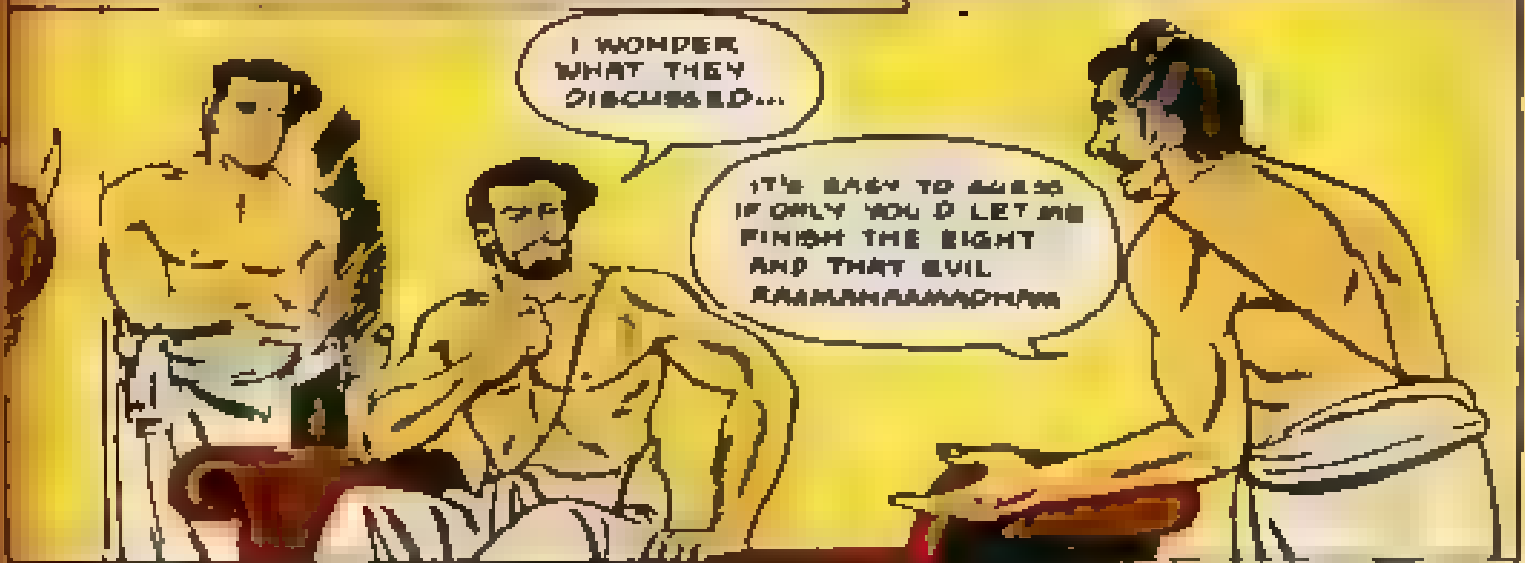
HE THAT THE OATH
WAS FOR OUR
ENEMIES YOU
ARE ONE OF US

THROUGH THE TWO AUTOMOBILE WHEELS SHE RATED THREE AND SUPERIOR BECAUSE YEARS AGO
SHE HAD BY THE SIDE OF HER HOUSE A SMALL TREE IN FRONT OF HER HOUSE WHICH SHE
WAS WITH REGULARITY AND SHE (L) HAD A LOT OF IT AS A GIFT



ARMSTRONG LOCATED THE MAN AND INFORMED THE LANCY TO GET ANOTHER PERSON WITH HIM

NEXT MORNING AT THE PALACE MAARTHAANDA WHO HAD LEARNT OF THE COUNCIL, WAS DISCUSSING THE SITUATION WITH HIS COUNSELLOR



OTHER (MURDERER)

THE NEXT DAY FOUND THAMMI IN A JOYFUL MOOD HE HAD THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE KING

AM MY LOVELY
SUSHADRA! SO YOU
HAVE COME AT LAST
IS IT BECAUSE THE KING
HAVE DECIDED TO
SUPPORT MY CLAIM
TO THE THRONE?

YOU CAN
PROVE
PATERNITY



NO IT'S BECAUSE I HEARD
THAT YOU HAD BEEN
PATERNITY TESTED THE
DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY

HAD STAYED THERE
ENTERED HER ROOM
AT NIGHT AND
FROTH ENDED HER

SO
I THINK I



OH I WALKED
UP TO HER
BUT

BUT
WHAT?



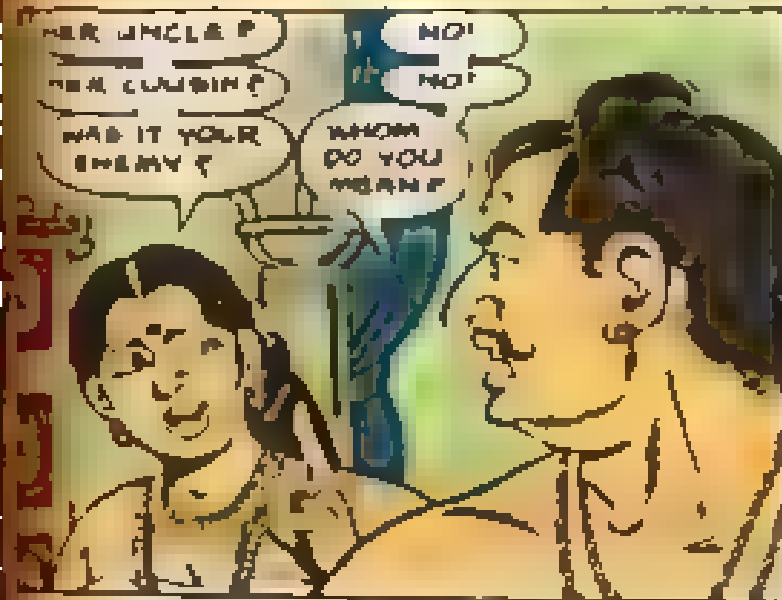
ANOTHER ENTERED THE ROOM AND DRAGGED ME AWAY



HER UNCLE?
HER COUNCIL?
HAD IT YOUR
ENEMY?

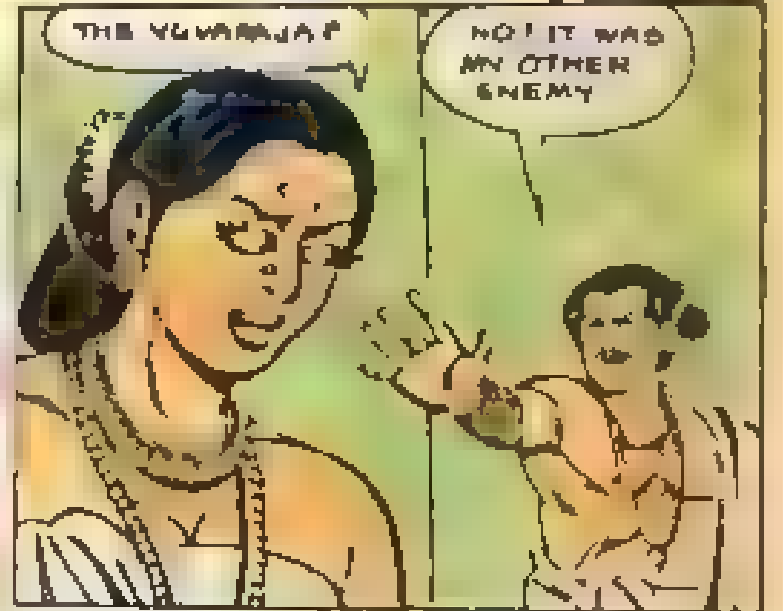
NO!
NO!

WHOM
DO YOU
MEAN?



THE YUVARAJA?

NO! IT WAS
MY OTHER
ENEMY



WHO? WHICH
ENEMY? DON'T
SPEAK IN
RIDDLES

FORGET IT!
IT FRIGHTENS
ME!

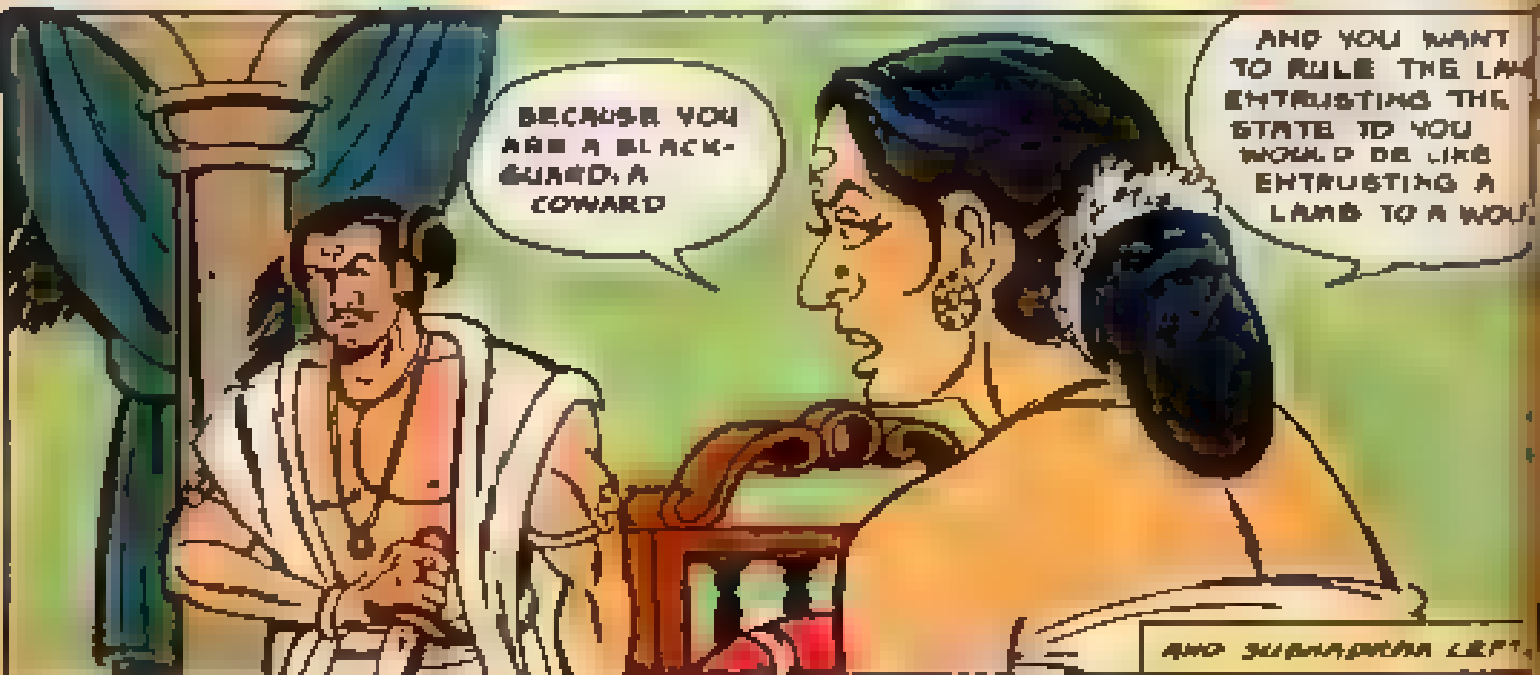


HAD IT KILL
ANANTA THEN?

NO!

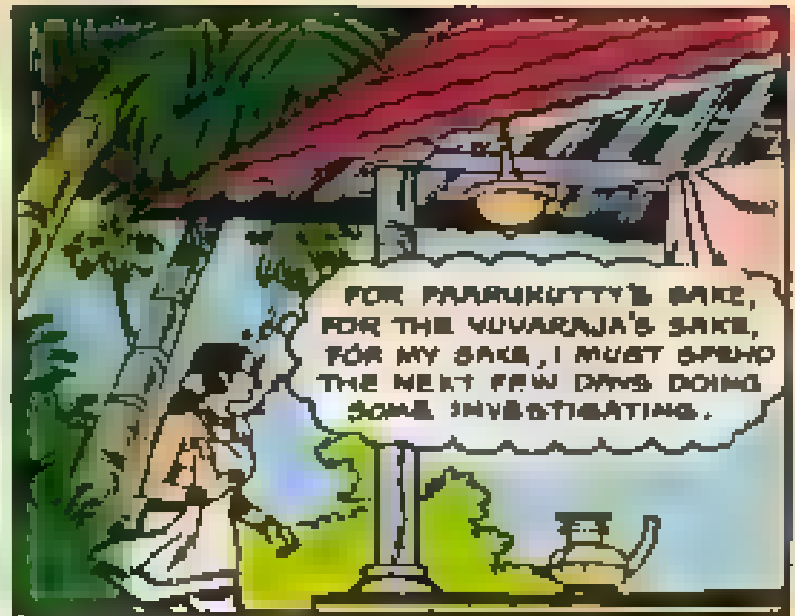
HIS GHOST!





THE NEXT DAY WAS A RESTLESS ONE FOR HER.

WAS IT A GHOST?
OR IS ANANTA ALIVE?
IF HE IS, HAS HE FOR-
GOTTEN PARUKUTTY?
OH, GOD!



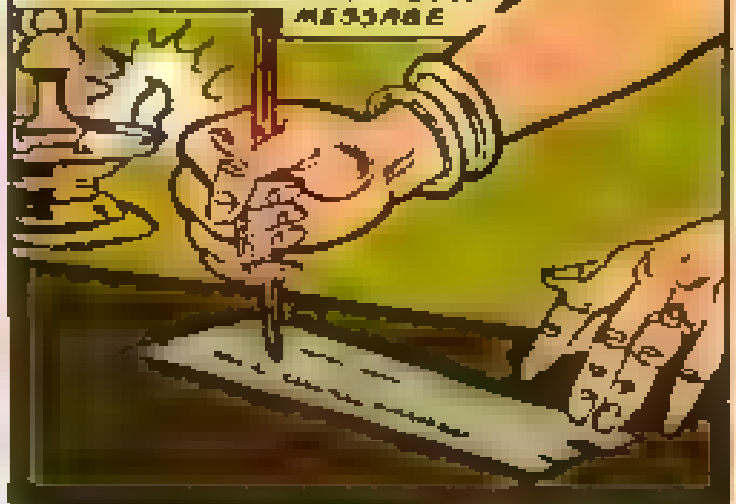
FOR PARUKUTTY'S SAKE,
FOR THE YUVARAJA'S SAKE,
FOR MY SAKE, I MUST SPEND
THE NEXT FEW DAYS DOING
SOME INVESTIGATING.

THAT EVENING —

WHAT'S THE
LATEST?

THAMPI HAS ORDERED VELU
TO ASSASSINATE MAANTHAAN
ON THIS VERY NIGHT AND NOT
AFTER THE MAHARAJA'S
DEATH AS WE HAD RESOLVED.

SUBHADRAA HURRIED INTO HER
ROOM, CUT A STRIP OF PALM
LEAF AND SCRATCHED OUT A
MESSAGE



THEN SHE WENT TO A SMALL THATLED HOUSE,
A FEW YARDS AWAY FROM HER OWN, AND —

ARM YOURSELF WELL,
AND RUN WITHOUT
STOPPING TO THE
YUVARAJA GIVE THIS
TO HIM AND ONLY
TO HIM

THEN SHE TURNED TO THE OTHER —

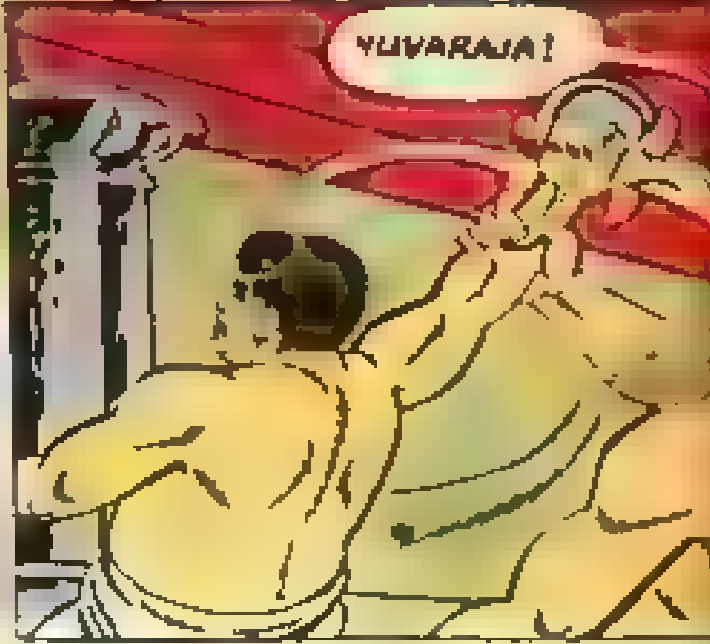
YOU GO TO THE
PATHAN CAMP
AND FIND OUT..



WHEN AT THE PALACE MATHANANDU WAS
ALONE HIS COUNSELLOR, LEARNING THAT KURUP
HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED BY THE CONSPIRATORS
HAD GONE OUT TO INVESTIGATE AND HIS BODY-
GUARD HAD GONE OUT ON AN ERRAND



YUVARAJA!



SUBHADRAN'S MESSENGER
HAD REACHED THERE IN THE
MID OF TIME



WHO COULD
THIS LOYAL,
BRAVE YOUNG
MAN BE?



LETTER.

MAARTHAANDA SEARCHED THE SERVANT AND FOUND THE LETTER



A MURDER!

ROYAL HEADS SHOULD
GUARD THEMSELVES
HIGH AND DRY ..

THAT'S JUST WHAT I'VE
BEEN SAYING. WHY ARE
YOU OUT HERE MAKING
A TARGET OF YOURSELF
FOR VELU'S SWORD?



AK-M-M THE UNKNOWN FRIEND
WHO SENT THAT LETTER SEEMS
TO KNOW THE MOVES OF THE
CONSPIRATORS



IF ONLY I KNEW
WHAT THEY'VE
DONE WITH
KURUP.



THERE WAS ONE WHO DID KNOW, THE
CHANNAN.

ONE DOWN YOU ROSE AND
FLEE THE WRATH OF KURUP.

SHIT'S
A FRIEND!

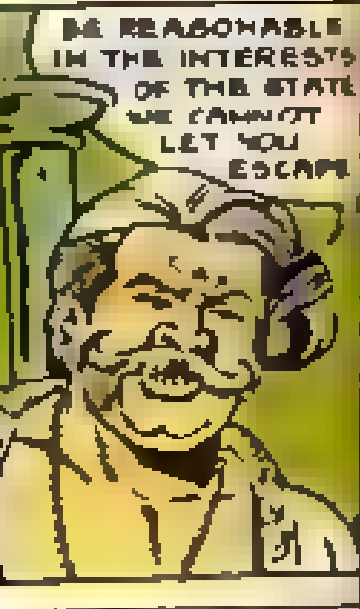


SOON —

YOU'VE GOT TO
ME YOU ARE
THE DEAREST
OF...



VOICES!
QUICK! LET'S
JUMP OUT.



WOMEN WAS UP BEFORE THEM THE NEXT
DAY WENT ALONG WITH HIS MEN WALKED
AMONGST PEOPLE WHISPERING INTO THEIR
EARS AND BY MIDDAY —

DO YOU HEAR?
THE YUVARAJA
AND HIS SOLDIERS
MURDERED VELU

OH YES! AND
I BELIEVE
KANNAMMAKKUR
TOO WAS
ATTACKED



HE ESCAPED BUT HIS
SERVANT WAS KILLED

IT SEEMS ANANTA'S
FATHER HAS FOUND
EVIDENCE TO PROVE
THAT THE REBELS
WHO ARE HIS SON
WAS NONE OTHER
THAN THE YUVARAJA



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE
YUVARAJA'S ILLNESS, THE
YUVARAJA HAS
SENT IN ARMS
TO KILL THE
YUVARAJA'S
SON!

OH! HAS
HE? WE'LL
KILL HIM
FIRST



DOWN
WITH THE
MURDERER!

TO THE
PALACE!

THE
BUTCHER!



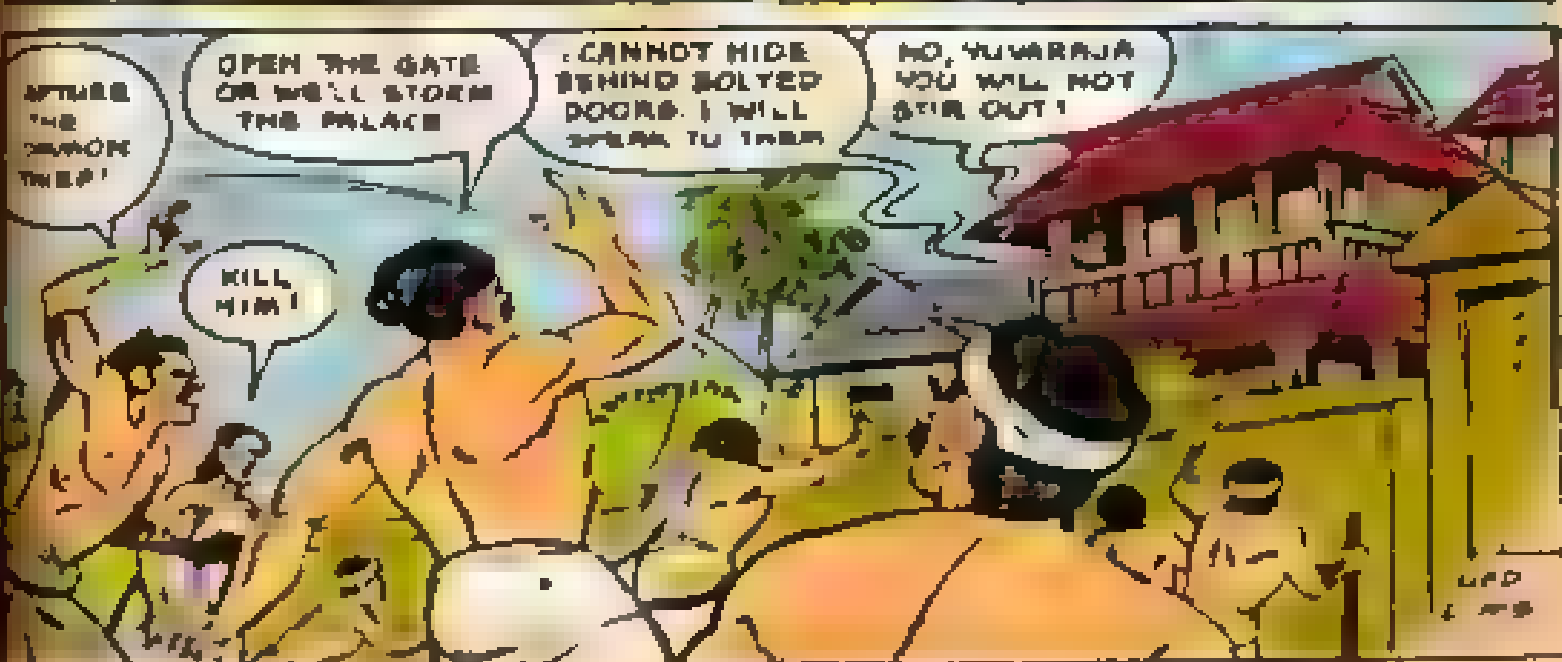
AFTER
THE
DEMON
THAT!

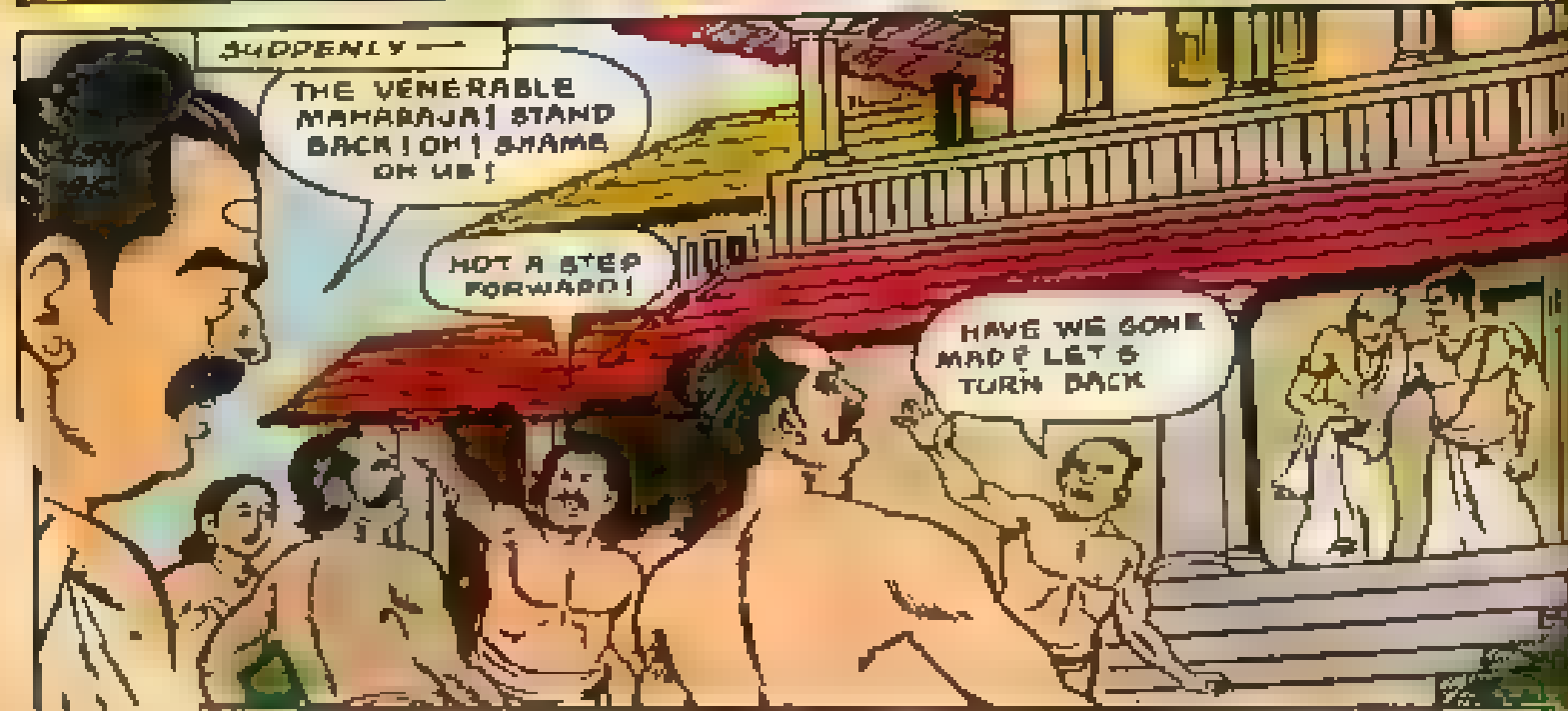
OPEN THE GATE
OR WE'LL STORM
THE PALACE

I CANNOT HIDE
BEHIND SOLID
DOORS. I WILL
SPEAK TO THEM

NO, YUVARAJA
YOU WILL NOT
STIR OUT!

KILL
HIM!





HE WENT TO SPEAK THE FILING MAHARAJA TO THE PEOPLE TO DISPERSE WITH A GESTURE OF HIS HAND.

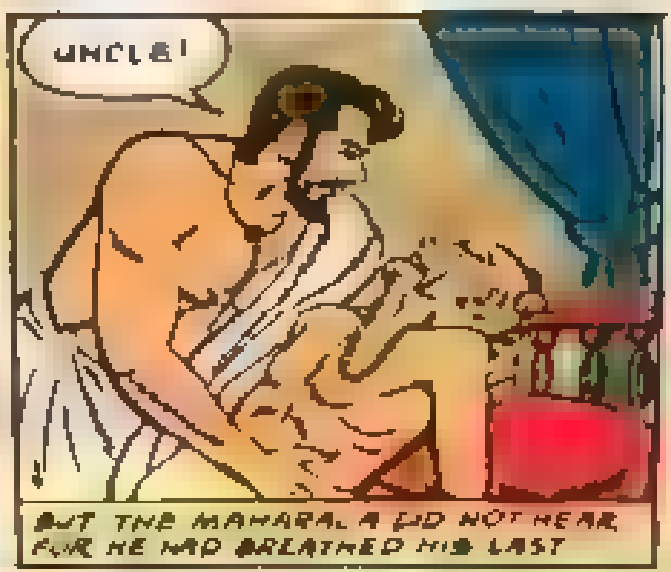


AND AS SOON AS IT HAD EVOLVED THE CROWD MELTED AWAY

A NEWSPAPER COULD NOT HAVE A BETTER COLUMN SELLER THAN YOU.



YOU WILL FORGIVE MY MISGUIDED SON AND SHOW HIM THE WAY.



UNCLE!

BUT THE MAHARAJA DID NOT HEAR FOR HE HAD BREATHED HIS LAST

MAARTHAANDA VARMA COULD NOT HAVE THE LEISURE OF INDULGING IN PERSONAL GRIEF HE WAS NOW THE HEAD OF THE STATE, THE PROTECTOR OF THE PEOPLE



ALL WARRIORS EMPLOYED BY THE STATE WILL HENCEFORTH REPORT HERE AT THE PALACE FOR DUTY OR ELSE FORFEIT THEIR WAGES



THAT INCLUDED THE MEN SERVING THAMPI

MAARTHAANDA VARMA HAD ISSUED HIS FIRST ORDER AND ESTABLISHED HIS SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE STATE

BUT THE CONSPIRATORS WERE NOT GOING TO TAKE IT LYING DOWN

THE DESPOT! IN THE INTERESTS OF THE STATE WE MUST DO WHAT IS TO BE DONE, THIS VERY NIGHT.

THE NERVE! HE HAD THE AUDACITY TO WITHDRAW MY MEN!

THAT NIGHT —

MAHARAJA! MAHARAJA! WAKE UP!

I AM KUTAMAN'S NIECE. YOUR LIFE IS IN DANGER. YOU MUST FLEE THE PALACE THIS VERY MOMENT.

THAMPI AND MY UNCLE ARE ALREADY ON THEIR WAY HERE WITH A THOUSAND SOLDIERS YOU MUST ESCAPE FROM TRIWARRUM

YOU ARE THE NEECE OF MY SWORN ENEMY. THIS IS JUST ANOTHER TRAP

BELIEVE ME, MAHARAJA. IT WAS I WHO SENT THE LETTER WARNING YOU OF...

YOU?

SAY NO MORE LET'S HURRY

I HAVE FOUR MEN WAITING AT MY HOME TO ESCORT YOU TO THE NORTH

RAJA MAATHANDAN VARMA HIS BODYGUARD AND HIS COUNSELLOR, DRESSED AS PAID LABOURERS LEFT THE PALACE WITH SUBHASKARA NONE WOULD SUSPECT THE SERVANTS OF KUTAMAN'S NIECE

AS THE FOUR HEARD SUBHADRA'S HOUSE, SOMEONE STEPPED OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THESE MEN IN THE STREETS AT THIS HOUR?

WHO ARE YOU TO QUESTION ME?

PILLAI!



PILLAI! ANANTA'S FATHER!

HOW GLAD I AM TO SEE YOU!

YOU... AND... HER? DID I HAVE TO SEE THIS TOO? THEN WHAT SUNDARAM!... THE DANCING-GIRL... SHE WAS TRUE.



WELL I HAVE SEEN YOU. I NEED NO FURTHER PROOF. I WILL DEPART.

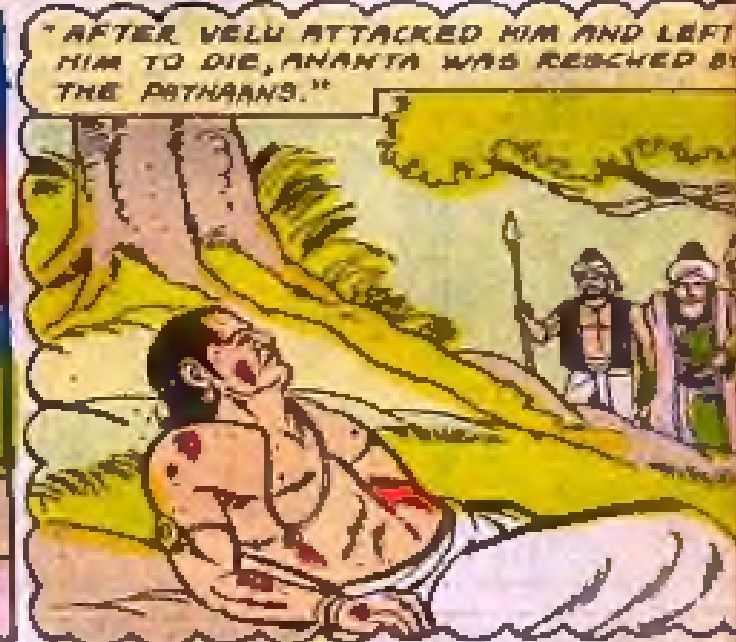
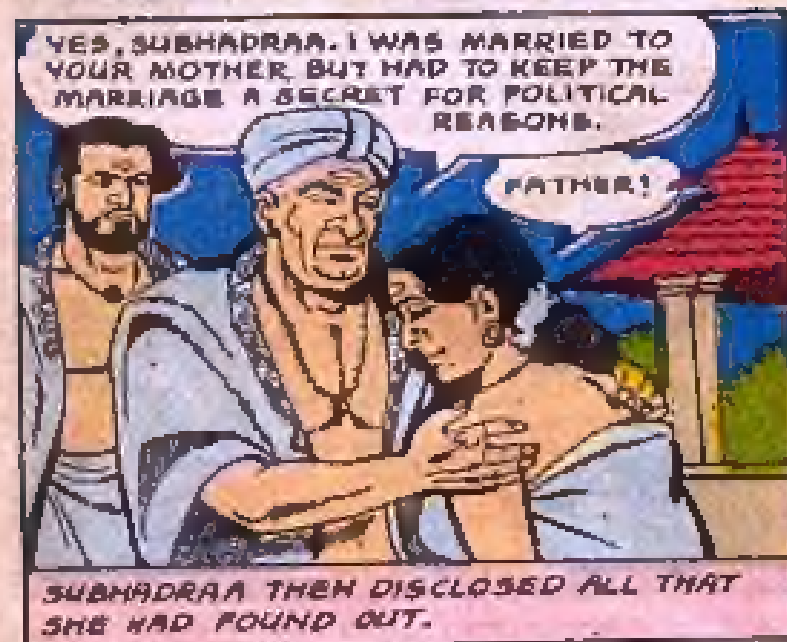
WAIT! WE HAVE SO MUCH TO TALK ABOUT.



WHAT IS THERE TO TALK WITH A MAN WHO MURDERED MY SON FOR A WOMAN?

HE DID NOT MURDER YOUR SON!



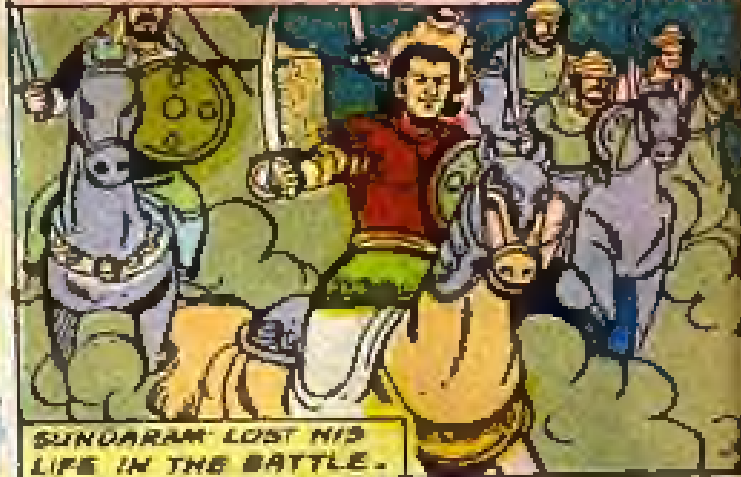




AS THE FORCES OF THAMPI AND MAARTHAAND-
RA CLASHED...



... THE PATHANS LED BY ANANTA AND
KURUP ENTERED THE FRAY.



SUNDARAM LOST HIS
LIFE IN THE BATTLE.

THAMPI AND THE EIGHT AND RAAMANAMA-
DHAM WERE TAKEN CAPTIVE. BUT —



SET KUTAMAN FREE,
PILLAI. I PROMISED
SUBHADRA I'D
FORGIVE HIM.

SO KUTAMAN WAS RELEASED.

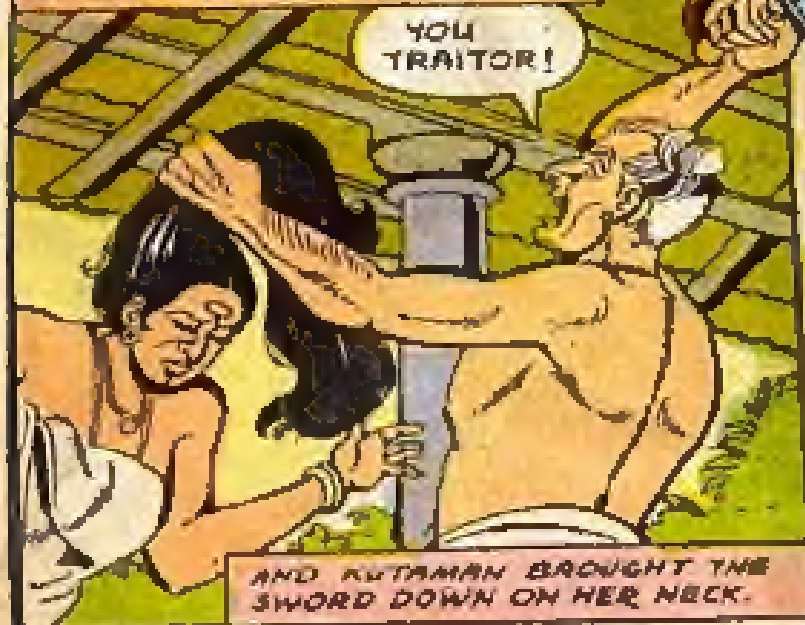
AT PAARUKUTTY'S HOUSE —

MAY YOU NEVER BE PARTED
AGAIN. I HAVE SENT A MAN
TO BRING YOUR MOTHER
HERE, ANANTA.

DEAR
SUBHADRA
I OWE THE
HAPPINESS
TO YOU.



BUT AT SUBHADRA'S HOUSE —



YOU
TRAITOR!

AND KUTAMAN BROUGHT THE
SWORD DOWN ON HER NECK.

WHEN MAARTHAANDA HEARD THE
SHOCKING NEWS —



NO LOYAL
SUBJECT OF
MINE SHALL
EVER SUFFER
YOUR CRUEL
UNJUST FATE
IN MY REIGN,
SUBHADRA.

TRUE ENOUGH MAARTHAANDA VARMA
PROVED TO BE A JUST, BENEVOLENT RULER.